

**DUAL CURE COATING
COMPOSITION AND PROCESSES FOR USING THE SAME**

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

(1.) FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The invention relates to coating compositions that are curable upon exposure to both electromagnetic radiation and heat energy as well as methods of using such dual cure coating compositions. More particularly, the invention relates to methods of making coated porous substrates that are substantially free of surface defects caused by vaporous emissions from the substrate.

(2.) BACKGROUND ART

[0002] Porous materials are used in a wide variety of applications. Porous as used herein refers to materials or substrates having one or more microporous surfaces with pore diameters of from 10 to 1500 nm. Examples of porous materials include wood, glass, leather, plastics, metals, mineral substances, fiber materials, and fiber reinforced materials.

[0003] Porous materials which are especially useful in the production of shaped and/or molded articles or components are plastics; mineral substances such as fired and unfired clay, ceramics, natural and artificial stone or cement; fiber materials especially glass fibers, ceramic fibers, carbon fibers, textile fibers, metal fibers, and composites thereof; fiber reinforced materials, especially plastic composites reinforced with one or more of the aforementioned fibers; and mixtures thereof. Examples of preferred porous materials for the production of shaped and/or molded articles are reinforced injection molded compound (RRIM), structural reinforced injection molded compound (SRIM), nylon composites, fiber reinforced sheet molded compounds (SMC) and fiber reinforced bulk molded compounds (BMC). SMC and BMC are most preferred porous substrates.

[0004] SMC and BMC have been found to be especially useful in the production of shaped articles having challenging contours and/or configurations. Compared to steel and thermoplastics, composites offer numerous advantages. They provide a favorable weight to strength ratio, consolidate multiple piece components, reduce tooling costs, provide improved dent and corrosion resistance, moderate process cycle times, reduce the cost of design changes, as well as moderate material cost. SMC and BMC have been used in the

manufacture of domestic appliances, automotive components, structural components and the like.

[0005] In many instances, it is desirable to apply one or more coating compositions to the surface of the shaped porous article. Coatings may be designed to provide effects which are visual, protective, or both. However, the production of coated shaped porous articles, especially articles of SMC or BMC, continues to present challenges.

[0006] Many shaped articles made of SMC or BMC have one or more sections in which it is more difficult to obtain a fully cured film. For example, some shaped articles contain areas of greater thickness that can function as heat sinks. This can result in lower effective surface temperatures that impede the cure of thermally curable coatings applied in that area.

[0007] Efforts to use coatings curable solely with the use of actinic radiation have encountered other problems. Actinic radiation as used herein refers to electromagnetic radiation such as UV radiation or X-rays, as well as to corpuscular radiation such as electron beams. The unique contours and configurations of many shaped porous articles result in three-dimensional articles having 'shadow' zones or areas that are obscured from direct irradiance from the chosen energy source. Thus, the use of coatings cured via actinic energy sources can result in uncured or partially cured coating films in those shadow areas not visible to one or more of the energy sources. Alternatively, increased expense may be incurred due to the procurement of additional actinic energy sources in an effort to 'reach' all shadow areas. It will be appreciated that in many instances, manufacturing constraints will limit the number and/or location of actinic energy sources. Also, in many cases the overspray does not cure due to oxygen inhibition caused by the large surface area ratio of the particle and any dispersed oxygen within the particle.

[0008] Another significant problem encountered in the coating of porous substrates is the persistent appearance of surface defects, especially those resulting from outgassing or vaporous emissions from the substrate. Often referred to as porosity, popping, or blistering, such defects significantly reduce first run capability, capacity and quality while increasing process and operational costs. Porosity is apparent after the primer and/or topcoating process. It may appear in the topcoat without any visible defects in the primer. It can be extremely sporadic and unpredictable. The root cause of porosity is generally accepted to be

the evolution of gases from the substrate during the curing process. The elevated temperatures cause entrapped gases and by-products to expand through the paint films. As these gases escape, they cause eruptions or bubbles in the paint film. The final defect appears as a full dome or the residue from a deflated bubble. Unfortunately, the presence of even a few such porosity defects can result in the rejection of the coated article. Thus, manufacturers of coated porous surfaces have long sought methods capable of consistently producing high quantities of defect-free coated surfaces having optimum smoothness. Methods capable of substantially eliminating porosity defects are especially desired.

[0009] In addition, applied coatings must have good adhesion to the underlying porous substrate and be overcoatable with one or more subsequently applied coatings. The failure of an applied, cured film to either the underlying substrate and/or to one or more subsequently applied coatings is referred to herein as an intercoat adhesion (ICA) failure. Coatings vulnerable to adhesion failures are commercially unacceptable, especially to the automotive industry.

[00010] Adhesion can be particularly challenging when a coated plastic substrate becomes part of an article that is subsequently subjected to the electrocoat process. In some manufacturing facilities, it is desirable for coated porous shaped articles of SMC/BMC to be affixed to metal structure prior to their submersion in an e-coat bath. After exiting from the bath, the entire structure is subjected to conditions sufficient to effect complete crosslinking of the electrodeposition coating where present. Although the coated shaped article of SMC/BMC will generally not be coated during this process, it is desirable that the electrodeposition bake not affect the overcoatability of any coatings applied prior to the electrodeposition bake. In particular, any coatings applied to the substrate before the electrodeposition bake must continue to exhibit desirable adhesion with regards to subsequently applied primers, basecoats, and/or clearcoats.

[00011] In addition to optimum adhesion, coatings intended to correct porosity defects must also exhibit desirable weatherability, durability, humidity resistance, smoothness, and the like. In particular, coatings intended to eliminate outgassing defects must continue to exhibit optimum adhesion in thermal shock tests, cold gravel tests and after weathering tests such as Florida exposure, QUV, WOM or field use.

[00012] Although the prior art has attempted to address these issues, deficiencies remain.

[00013] German Patent Application DE 199 20 799 provides a coating composition curable both thermally and with actinic radiation. The composition comprises at least one constituent (a1) containing at least two functional groups (a11) which serve for crosslinking with actinic radiation and if desired, at least two functional groups (a12), which are able to undergo thermal crosslinking reactions with a complementary functional group (a22) in component (a2). Examples of functional groups (a11) and (a12) are respectively acrylate groups and hydroxyl groups. The composition further comprises at least one component (a2) containing at least two functional groups (a21) which serve for crosslinking with actinic radiation, and at least one functional group (a22) which is able to undergo thermal crosslinking reactions with complementary functional group (a12) of constituent (a1). Examples of functional groups (a21) and (a22) are respectively acrylate groups and isocyanate groups.

[00014] The composition of DE 199 20 799 further comprises a at least one photoinitiator (a3), at least one thermal crosslinking initiator (a4), at least one reactive diluent (a5) curable thermally and/or with actinic radiation, at least one coatings additive (a6), and/or at least one thermally curable constituent (a7), with the proviso that the coating composition comprises at least one thermally curable constituent (a7) if constituent (a1) has no functional group (a12). Illustrative examples of materials suitable for use as constituent (a7) include thermally curable binders and/or crosslinking agents such as blocked polyisocyanates.

[00015] German patent applications DE 199 30 665 A1, DE 199 30 067 A1, and DE 199 30 664 A1 and DE 199 24 674 A1 disclose coating materials curable thermally and with actinic radiation and comprising at least one constituent (a1), containing on average per molecule at least two functional groups (a11) which contain at least one bond which can be activated with actinic radiation and which serves for crosslinking with actinic radiation, and, if desired, at least one isocyanate-reactive group (a12), for example, a hydroxyl group, at least one thermally curable component (a2) containing at least two isocyanate-reactive groups, said constituent mandatorily comprising copolymers of olefinically unsaturated monomers with diphenylethylene and its derivatives, and (a3) at least one polyisocyanate.

5 [00016] International patent application WO 98/40170 discloses a wet-on-wet process in which an applied but uncured basecoat film is overcoated with a clearcoat. The applied but uncured clearcoat film is then exposed to actinic radiation before the two films are baked together. The clearcoat composition, based on solids, contains from 50 to 98% by weight of a system A) and from 2 to 50% of a system B. System A is thermally curable by addition and/or condensation reactions and is substantially free from free-radically polymerizable double bonds and from groups which are otherwise reactive with free-radically polymerizable double bonds of System B. System B is curable by exposure to actinic radiation through free-radical polymerization of olefinic double bonds. The system A) preferably comprises a hydroxy-functional acrylate binder having an unspecified glass transition temperature. System (B) may be a one-, two-, or multi-component system. The international patent application does not indicate whether the disclosed clearcoat composition addresses issues relating to the coating of microporous surfaces.

10 [00017] DE 101 13884.9 discloses a process for the coating of microporous surfaces having pores of a size of from 10 to 1500 nm, especially SMC and BMC. The process utilizes a coating composition that comprises at least one constituent (a1), at least one thermally curable component (a2), and at least one polyisocyanate (a3). Constituent (a1) comprises at least two functional groups (a11) per molecule which have at least one bond activatable with actinic radiation and, optionally at least one isocyanate-reactive group (a12). Component (a2) comprises at least two isocyanate-reactive groups.

20 [00018] While the foregoing do provide improvements, none of the prior art compositions have been able to consistently provide all of the desired performance properties.

25 [00019] There is thus a continuing need for coating compositions and/or processes which can provide improvements in the coating of porous surfaces and the obtainment of topcoated porous surfaces which are substantially free of surface defects caused by the emission of vaporous components from the porous surfaces and which simultaneously possess a variety of other commercially desirable performance properties, especially commercially acceptable adhesion between coating layers.

30 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[00020] The coating composition of the invention addresses the needs of the prior art.

[00021] The dual cure coating compositions of the invention comprise a radiation curable component (a1), a thermally curable binder component (a2), and a thermally curable crosslinking component (a3). Radiation curable component (a1) is polymerizable upon exposure to radiation and comprises at least two functional groups (a11) comprising at least one bond activatable with radiation, and one or more isocyanate-reactive groups (a12).

Thermally curable binder component (a2) is polymerizable upon exposure to heat, has at least two isocyanate-reactive functional groups (a21), and substantially no functional groups (a22) having bonds activatable upon exposure to electromagnetic radiation, especially UV radiation. Thermally curable crosslinking component (a3) comprises at least 2.0 isocyanate groups (a31) per molecule. The ratio of NCO groups to the sum of isocyanate-reactive functional groups (a12) and (a21) is less than 1.30.

[00022] It has been found that the combination of a particular thermally curable binder (a2) which is substantially free of functional groups (a22) having bonds activatable upon exposure to electromagnetic radiation and an NCO index (i.e., ratio of NCO groups to the sum of isocyanate-reactive groups (a12) and (a21) of less than 1.30 unexpectedly provides cured coated porous surfaces or articles which are substantially free of surface defects caused by vaporous emissions and which further possess commercially desirable adhesion. In particular, thermally curable binder having a desirable balance between porosity sealing and adhesion, especially adhesion measured with respect to cold gravel, thermal shock, and weatherability tests is obtained.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[00023] The coating compositions of the invention are dual cure. As defined herein, 'dual cure' refers to curable coating compositions that require exposure to both electromagnetic radiation and heat to achieve the degree of crosslinking necessary to achieve desired performance properties. Thus, in one aspect, the coating compositions of the invention are at least partially curable or polymerizable upon exposure to some portions of the electromagnetic radiation spectrum. In another aspect of the invention, the coating compositions of the invention are at least partially thermally curable or polymerizable upon exposure to thermal or heat energy.

[00024] Radiation cure and thermal cure may occur sequentially or concurrently. In a preferred embodiment, the coating compositions of the invention will subjected to a first

stage of curing followed by a second stage of curing. Either radiation cure or thermal cure may occur first. In a most preferred embodiment, the coating compositions of the invention will first be subjected to electromagnetic radiation, especially UV radiation, followed by a second stage of cure, wherein the coating compositions previously subjected to electromagnetic radiation will be subjected to a thermal cure.

[00025] It is within the scope of the invention that the second stage does not have to immediately succeed the first stage and can occur after the application of one or more subsequently applied coatings. For example, it is within the scope of the invention to apply one or more additional coating compositions to the radiation cured coating of the invention and then simultaneously thermally cure the one or more additionally applied coatings together with the radiation cured coating of the invention.

[00026] Electromagnetic radiation as used herein refers to energy having wavelengths of less than 500 nm and corpuscular radiation such as electron beam. Preferred electromagnetic radiation will have wavelengths of from 180 to 450 nm, i.e., in the UV region. More preferably, the electromagnetic radiation will be UV radiation having wavelengths of from 225 to 450 nm. The most preferred electromagnetic radiation will be UV radiation having wavelengths of from 250 to 425 nm.

[00027] Heat as used herein refers to the transmission of energy by either contact via molecular vibrations or by certain types of radiation.

[00028] Heat energy transferred by radiation as used herein refers to the use of electromagnetic energy generally described as infrared (IR) or near-infrared (NIR), i.e., energy having an approximate wavelength of from 800 nm to 10^{-3} m.

[00029] Heat as used herein also encompasses energy transferred via convection or conduction. Convection refers to the transmission of heat by the rise of heated liquids or gases and the fall of colder parts. Conduction may be defined as the transmission of matter or energy. Transmission of heat energy via convection is especially preferred.

[00030] The coating compositions of the invention comprise at least three components, a radiation curable component (a1) which polymerizes upon exposure to electromagnetic radiation, especially UV radiation, a thermally curable binder component (a2) which polymerizes upon exposure to heat, and a thermally curable crosslinking component (a3) which has at least 2.0 isocyanate groups per molecule.

[00031] Radiation curable component (a1) contains on average at least two functional groups (a11) per molecule, and more preferably at least three functional groups (a11). Each functional group (a11) will preferably have at least one bond which is activatable upon exposure to electromagnetic radiation, especially UV radiation, so as to crosslink. In a particularly preferred embodiment, each functional group (a11) will have one UV activatable bond.

[00032] In a preferred embodiment, the coating composition of the invention will comprise not more than six functional groups (a11) on average per molecule, and most preferably not more than five functional groups (a11) on average per molecule.

[00033] Examples of suitable bonds that can be activated with electromagnetic radiation, and especially UV radiation, are carbon-hydrogen single bonds or carbon-carbon, carbon-oxygen, carbon-nitrogen, carbon-phosphorus or carbon-silicon single or double bonds. Of these, the double bonds are preferred, with the carbon-carbon double bonds being most preferred.

[00034] Highly suitable carbon-carbon double bonds are present, for example, in (meth)acrylate, ethacrylate, crotonate, cinnamate, vinyl ether, vinyl ester, ethenylarylene, dicyclopentadienyl, norbornenyl, isoprenyl, isopropenyl, allyl or butenyl groups; ethenylarylene ether, dicyclopentadienyl ether, norbornenyl ether, isoprenyl ether, isopropenyl ether, allyl ether or butenyl ether groups; or ethenylarylene ester, dicyclopentadienyl ester, norbornenyl ester, isoprenyl ester, isopropenyl ester, allyl ester or butenyl ester groups. Of these, (meth)acrylate groups are preferred, with acrylate groups being most preferred.

[00035] Radiation curable component (a1) will further comprise at least one functional group (a12) which is reactive with the isocyanate groups (a31) of thermally curable crosslinking component (a3).

[00036] Examples of suitable isocyanate-reactive groups are all those groups which are reactable with isocyanates. Illustrative examples of suitable functional groups include thiol groups, primary or secondary amino groups, imino groups or hydroxyl groups, with hydroxyl groups being most preferred.

[00037] Radiation curable component (a1) may be oligomeric or polymeric. In the context of the present invention, an oligomer is a compound containing in general on

average from 2 to 15 basic structures or monomer units. A polymer, in contrast, is a compound containing in general on average at least 10 basic structures or monomer units. Such compounds may also be referred to as binders or resins. In contrast, a low molecular mass compound in the context of the present invention refers to a compound which derives substantially from only one basic structure or monomer unit. Compounds of this kind may also be referred to as reactive diluents and are discussed below in regards to optional reactive diluent component (a4).

[00038] Radiation curable component (a1) will generally have a number average molecular weight of from 500 to 50,000, preferably from 1000 to 5000. In a preferred aspect of the invention, the sum of radiation curable component (a1) and any optional reactive diluents (a4) will preferably have a double bond equivalent weight of from 400 to 2000, more preferably of from 500 to 900. In addition, the combination of radiation curable components (a1) and any optional reactive diluents (a4) will preferably have a viscosity at 23°C of from 250 to 11,000 mPas.

[00039] Radiation curable component (a1) may be employed in an amount of from 1 to 50% by weight, preferably from 3 to 45% by weight, and most preferably from 5 to 20% by weight, based in each case on the total nonvolatile solids of the film-forming components of the coating composition of the invention. Film-forming components as used herein refers to components such as radiation curable component (a1), thermally curable binder component (a2), thermally curable crosslinking component (a3), optional reactive diluent (a4), and any other monomeric, oligomeric or polymeric components which chemically react with any of components (a1), (a2) or (a3) so as to enter into the resulting polymerized network.

[00040] Examples of binders or resins suitable for use as radiation curable component (a1) come from the oligomer and/or polymer classes of the (meth)acryloyl-functional(meth)acrylic copolymers, polyether acrylates, polyester acrylates, polyesters, epoxy acrylates, urethane acrylates, amino acrylates, melamine acrylates, silicone acrylates and phosphazene acrylates, and the corresponding (meth)acrylates. It will be appreciated that (meth)acrylics and (meth)acrylates refer to both acrylates and methacrylates as well as acrylics and methacrylics. However, acrylic and acrylate species are preferred over methacrylic and methacrylate species.

[00041] Radiation curable component (a1) will preferably be free from aromatic structural units. Preference is given to using urethane (meth)acrylates, phosphazene (meth)acrylates and/or polyester (meth)acrylates, with urethane (meth)acrylates, with aliphatic urethane acrylates being most preferred:

5 [00042] Urethane (meth)acrylates suitable for use as radiation curable component (a1) may be obtained by reacting a diisocyanate or a polyisocyanate with a chain extender selected from the group consisting of diols, polyols, diamines, polyamines, dithiols, polythiols, alkanolamines, and mixtures thereof, and then reacting the remaining free isocyanate groups with at least one hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylate or a hydroxyalkyl ester of
10 one or more ethylenically unsaturated carboxylic acids. The amounts of chain extenders, diisocyanates and/or polyisocyanates, and hydroxyalkyl esters in this case are preferably chosen so that 1.) the ratio of equivalents of the NCO groups to the reactive groups of the chain extender (hydroxyl, amino and/or mercaptyl groups) is between 3:1 and 1:2, and most preferably 2:1, and 2.) the OH groups of the hydroxyalkyl esters of the ethylenically
15 unsaturated carboxylic acids are stoichiometric with regard to the remaining free isocyanate groups of the prepolymer formed from isocyanate and chain extender.

[00043] It is also possible to prepare urethane (meth)acrylates suitable for use as radiation curable component (a1) by first reacting some of the isocyanate groups of a diisocyanate or polyisocyanate with at least one hydroxyalkyl ester and then reacting the
20 remaining isocyanate groups with a chain extender. The amounts of chain extender, isocyanate and hydroxyalkyl ester should also be selected such that the ratio of equivalents of the NCO groups to the reactive groups of the hydroxyalkyl ester is between 3:1 and 1:2, preferably 2:1, while the ratio of equivalents of the remaining NCO groups to the OH groups of the chain extender is 1:1.

25 [00044] It will be appreciated that urethane (meth)acrylates which result from other reaction mechanisms may also be suitable for use as radiation curable component (a1) in the instant invention. For example, some of the isocyanate groups of a diisocyanate may first be reacted with a diol, after which a further portion of the isocyanate groups may be reacted with a hydroxyalkyl ester, and subsequently reacting the remaining isocyanate groups with a
30 diamine.

[00045] In another embodiment, urethane (meth)acrylates suitable for use as radiation curable component (a1) may be flexibilized. For example, a urethane (meth)acrylate may be flexibilized by reacting corresponding isocyanate functional prepolymers or oligomers with relatively long-chain aliphatic diols and/or diamines, especially aliphatic diols and/or diamines having at least 6 carbon atoms. Such flexibilizing reactions may be carried out before or after the addition of acrylic and/or methacrylic acid onto the oligomers and/or prepolymers.

[00046] Illustrative examples of urethane (meth)acrylates suitable for use as radiation curable component (a1) include polyfunctional aliphatic urethane acrylates which are commercially available in materials such as Crodamer® UVU 300 from Croda Resins Ltd., Kent, Great Britain; Genomer® 4302, 4235, 4297 or 4316 from Rahn Chemie, Switzerland; Ebecryl® 284, 294, IRR 351, 5129 or 1290 from UCB, Drogenbos, Belgium; Roskydal® LS 2989 or LS 2545 or V94-504 from Bayer AG, Germany; Viaktin® VTE 6160 from Vianova, Austria; or Laromer® 8861 from BASF AG and experimental products modified from it.

[00047] Hydroxyl-containing urethane (meth)acrylates suitable for use as radiation curable component (a1) are disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 4,634,602 A and U.S. Patent No. 4,424,252 A. An example of a suitable polyphosphazene (meth)acrylate is the phosphazene dimethacrylate from Idemitsu, Japan.

[00048] The coating material further comprises at least one thermally curable binder component (a2) comprising at least two isocyanate-reactive groups (a21). Examples of suitable isocyanate-reactive groups (a21) are those described above with respect to isocyanate-reactive groups (a12). Most preferably, the isocyanate reactive groups (a21) will be hydroxyl groups.

[00049] While the at least one thermally curable binder component (a2) must have at least two isocyanate-reactive groups, more than two isocyanate groups are within the scope of the invention. In a particularly preferred embodiment, the thermally curable binder component (a2) will have from two to ten isocyanate-reactive groups (a21) per molecule, most preferably from two to seven isocyanate-reactive groups (a21) per molecule.

[00050] The thermally curable binder component (a2) is oligomeric or polymeric as defined above. Number average molecular weights of from 500 to 50,000 are suitable, with

number average molecular weights of from 500 to 4000 preferred and those from 500 to 2000 being most preferred

[00051] Oligomers and polymers generally suitable for use as thermally curable binder component (a2) may be (meth)acrylate copolymers, polyesters, alkyds, amino resins, polyurethanes, polylactones, polycarbonates, polyethers, epoxy resin-amine adducts, (meth)acrylatediols, partially saponified polyvinyl esters of polyureas, and mixtures thereof. Particularly preferred oligomers and polymeric materials suitable for use as component (a2) are (meth)acrylate copolymers, polyesters, polyurethanes, and epoxy resin-amine adducts. Most preferably, thermally curable binder component (a2) will be a polyester.

[00052] Polyesters having active hydrogen groups such as hydroxyl groups are especially suitable for use as thermally curable binder component (a2). Such polyesters may be prepared by the polyesterification of organic polycarboxylic acids (e.g., phthalic acid, hexahydrophthalic acid, adipic acid, maleic acid) or their anhydrides with organic polyols containing primary or secondary hydroxyl groups (e.g., ethylene glycol, butylene glycol, neopentyl glycol).

[00053] Suitable polyesters can be prepared by the esterification of a polycarboxylic acid or an anhydride thereof with a polyol and/or an epoxide. The polycarboxylic acids used to prepare the polyester consist primarily of monomeric polycarboxylic acids or anhydrides thereof having 2 to 18 carbon atoms per molecule. Among the acids that are useful are phthalic acid, hexahydrophthalic acid, , sebacic acid, , and other dicarboxylic acids of various types. Minor amounts of monobasic acids can be included in the reaction mixture, for example, benzoic acid, stearic acid, acetic acid, and oleic acid. Also, higher carboxylic acids can be used, for example, trimellitic acid and tricarballylic acid. Anhydrides of the acids referred to above, where they exist, can be used in place of the acid. Also, lower alkyl esters of the acids can be used, for example, dimethyl glutarate and dimethyl terephthalate.

[00054] Polyols that can be used to prepare the polyester include diols such as alkylene glycols. Specific examples include ethylene glycol, 1,6-hexanediol, neopentyl glycol, and 2,2-dimethyl-3-hydroxypropyl-2,2-dimethyl-3-hydroxypropionate. Other suitable glycols include 2,2-dimethyl-3-hydroxypropyl-2,2-dimethyl-3-hydroxypropionate. Other suitable glycols include hydrogenated Bisphenol A, cyclohexanediol, cyclohexanedimethanol, caprolactone-based diols such as the reaction product of e-

caprolactone and ethylene glycol, hydroxy-alkylated bisphenols, polyether glycols such as poly(oxytetramethylene)glycol, and the like. Although the polyol component can comprise all diols, polyols of higher functionality can also be used. Examples of polyols of higher functionality would include trimethylol ethane, trimethylol propane, pentaerythritol, and the like.

[00055] Some thermally curable binders (a2) which may be suitable for use in the instant invention are commercially available under the trade names Desmophen® 650, 2089, 1100, 670, 1200 or 2017 by Bayer, Priplas or Pripol® by Uniquema, Chempol® polyester or polyacrylate-polyol by CCP, Crodapol®

[00056] However, it has been found that a particularly advantageous balance of performance properties can be achieved when thermally curable binder component (a2) has substantially no functional groups having bonds activatable upon exposure to UV radiation. Such functional groups may be those as described above with regards to functional groups (a11). Most preferably, thermally curable binder component (a2) will be a fully saturated compound.

[00057] Optionally, thermally curable component (a2) may also be selected to have a polydispersity of less than 4.0, preferably less than 3.5, more preferably a polydispersity of from 1.5 to less than 3.5 and most preferably a polydispersity of from 1.50 to less than 3.0. Polydispersity is determined from the following equation: (weight average molecular weight (M_w)/number average molecular weight (M_n)). A monodisperse polymer has a PDI of 1.0. Further, as used herein, M_n and M_w are determined from gel permeation chromatography using polystyrene standards.

[00058] In another optional aspect of the invention, the thermally curable binder component (a2) may also be selected so as to have less than 5% by weight of aromatic ring moieties, preferably no more than 2% by weight of aromatic ring moieties, and most preferably from 0 to less than 2% by weight of aromatic ring moieties, all based on the nonvolatile weight of thermally curable binder component (a2).

[00059] An especially preferred polyester for use as thermally curable binder component (a2) is Setal™ 26-1615, commercially available from Akzo Nobel of Louisville, KY.

[00060] The amount of component (a2) in the coating compositions of the invention may vary widely and is guided by the requirements of the individual case. However, thermally curable binder component (a2) is preferably used in an amount of from 5 to 90% by weight, more preferably from 6 to 80% by weight, with particular preference from 7 to 70% by weight, with very particular preference from 8 to 60% by weight, and in particular from 9 to 50% by weight, based in each case on the total nonvolatile solids of the film-forming components of the coating composition.

[00061] The dual cure coating compositions of the invention also comprise at least one thermally curable crosslinking component (a3). Most preferably, thermally curable crosslinking component (a3) will be a di- and/or polyisocyanate, with polyisocyanates being most preferred. Such di- and/or polyisocyanates may be blocked or unblocked.

[00062] The thermally curable crosslinking component (a3) will preferably contain on average at least 2.0 preferably more than 2.0, and in particular more than 3.0 isocyanate groups per molecule. There is basically no upper limit on the number of isocyanate groups; in accordance with the invention, however, it is of advantage if the number does not exceed 15, preferably 12, with particular preference 10, with very particular preference 8.0, and in particular 6.0. Most preferably, thermally curable crosslinking component (a3) will have from 2.5 to 3.5 isocyanate groups per molecule.

[00063] Examples of suitable diisocyanates are isophorone diisocyanate (i.e., 5-isocyanato-i-isocyanatomethyl-1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexane), 5-isocyanato-1-(2-isocyanatoethyl-1-yl)-1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexane, 5-isocyanato-1-(3-isocyanatoprop-1-yl)-1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexane, 5-isocyanato-(4-isocyanatobut-1-yl)-1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexane, i-isocyanato-2-(3-isocyanatoprop-1-yl)cyclohexane, 1-isocyanato-2-(3-isocyanatoethyl-1-yl)cyclohexane, 1-isocyanato-2-(4-isocyanatobut-1-yl)cyclohexane, 1,2-diisocyanatocyclobutane, 1,3-diisocyanatocyclobutane, 1,2-diisocyanatocyclopentane, 1,3-diisocyanatocyclopentane, 1,2-diisocyanatocyclohexane, 1,3-diisocyanatocyclohexane, 1,4-diisocyanatocyclohexane, dicyclohexylmethane-2,4-diisocyanate, trimethylene diisocyanate, tetramethylene diisocyanate, pentamethylene diisocyanate, hexamethylene diisocyanate (HDI), ethylethylene diisocyanate, trimethylhexane diisocyanate, heptamethylene diisocyanate, methylpentyl diisocyanate (MPDI), nonane triisocyanate (NTI) or diisocyanates derived from dimer fatty acids, as sold under the commercial

designation DDI 1410 by Henkel and described in the patents WO 97/49745 and WO 97/49747, especially 2-heptyl-3,4-bis(9-isocyanatononyl)-1-pentyl- cyclohexane, or 1,2-, 1,4- or 1,3-bis(isocyanato-methyl)cyclohexane, 1,2-, 1,4- or 1,3-bis(2-isocyanatoeth-1-yl)cyclohexane, 1,3-bis(3-isocyanatoprop-1-yl)cyclohexane, 1,2-, 1,4- or 1,3-bis(4-isocyanatobut-1-yl)cyclohexane or liquid bis(4-isocyanatocyclohexyl)methane with a trans/trans content of up to 30% by weight, preferably 25% by weight, and in particular 20% by weight, as described in the patent applications DE 44 14 032 A1, GB 1220717 A1, DE 16 18 795 A1, and DE 17 93 785 A1, preferably isophorone diisocyanate, 5-isocyanato-1-(2-isocyanatoeth-1-yl)- 1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexane, 5-isocyanato-1-(3-isocyanatoprop-1-yl)- 1,3,3-trimethylcyclohexane, 5-isocyanato- (4-isocyanatobut-1-yl) -1, 3, 3-trimethylcyclohexane, 1-isocyanato-2-(3-isocyanatoprop-1-yl)pypiohexane, 1-isocyanato-2-(3-isocyanatoeth-1-yl)cyclohexane, 1-isocyanato-2-(4-isocyanatobut-1-yl)cyclohexane or HDI, with HDI being especially preferred.

[00064] Examples of suitable polyisocyanates are isocyanato-containing polyurethane prepolymers which can be prepared by reacting polyols with an excess of diisocyanates and which are preferably of low viscosity.

[00065] It is, also possible to use polyisocyanates containing isocyanurate, biuret, allophanate, iminooxadiazindione, urethane, urea, carbodiimide and/or uretdione groups, prepared conventionally from the above-described diisocyanates. Examples of suitable preparation processes and polyisocyanates are known, for example, from the patents CA 2,163,591 A, US-A-4,419,513, US 4,454,317 A, EP 0 646 608 A, US 4,801,675 A, EP 0 183 976 A1, DE 40 15 155 A1, EP 0 303 150 A1, EP 0 496 208 A1, EP 0 524 500 A1, EP 0 566 037 A1, US 5,258,482 A1, US 5,290,902 A1, EP 0 649 806 A1, DE 42 29 183 A1, and EP 0 531 820 A1, or are described in the German patent application DE 100 05 228.2. The isocyanurate of HDI is especially preferred for use as thermally curable crosslinking component (a3).

[00066] The high-viscosity polyisocyanates described in the German patent application DE 198 28 935 A1, or the polyisocyanate particles surface-deactivated by urea formation and/or blocking, as per the European patent applications EP 0 922 720 A1, EP 1 013 690 A1, and EP 1 029 879 A1 are also suitable for use as thermally curable crosslinking component (a3).

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[00067] Additionally suitable are the adducts, described in the German patent application DE 196 09 617 A1, of polyisocyanates with dioxanes, dioxolanes and oxazolidines containing isocyanate- reactive functional groups and still containing free isocyanate groups.

- 5 [00068] Most preferably, however, thermally curable crosslinking component (a3) will be a polyisocyanate such as the isocyanurate of HDI. In a particularly preferred embodiment, thermally curable crosslinking component (a3) will be substantially free of functional groups having bonds activatable upon exposure to electromagnetic radiation, especially UV radiation. Such bonds are described above in regards to functional groups
- 10 (a11). Most preferably, thermally curable crosslinking component (a3) will be a polyisocyanurate of HDI which is substantially free of carbon-carbon double bonds.

[00069] The amount of thermally curable crosslinking component (a3) in the coating compositions of the invention will generally be from 5 to 70% by weight, more preferably from 10 to 60% by weight, with particular preference from 15 to 55% by weight, with very

15 particular preference from 20 to 50% by weight, and in particular from 25 to 45% by weight, based in each case on the total nonvolatile of the film-forming components of the coating compositions of the invention.

[00070] In a most preferred aspect of the invention, the ratio of NCO groups (a31) to the sum of isocyanate-reactive functional groups in components (a12) and (a21) is less than

20 1.30, preferably from 0.50 to 1.25, more preferably from 0.75 to 1.10, very preferably less than 1.00, and most preferably from 0.75 to 1.00. In particular, a desirable balance between porosity sealing and adhesion, especially adhesion measured with respect to cold gravel, thermal shock, and weatherability, is obtained when the ratio of NCO groups (a31) to the sum of isocyanate-reactive functional groups in components (a12) and (a21) is less than

25 1.30, preferably from 0.50 to 1.25, more preferably from 0.75 to 1.10, very preferably less than 1.00, and most preferably from 0.75 to 1.00 and thermally curable binder component (a2) is substantially free of functional groups having bonds activatable upon exposure to UV radiation.

[00071] The coating compositions of the invention may further optionally comprise a

30 reactive diluent (a4) curable with actinic radiation and/or thermally. If used, reactive diluents (a4) will preferably be curable with electromagnetic radiation and most preferably

with UV radiation. Most preferably, such reactive diluents will also further comprise one or more functional groups reactive with thermally curable crosslinking component (a3). In a most preferred embodiment, a reactive diluent (a4) will be curable with electromagnetic radiation such as UV radiation and will further comprise a plurality of functional groups reactive with isocyanate groups such as are described above with regards to functional groups (a12) and (a21).

[00072] Examples of suitable thermally curable reactive diluents are positionally isomeric diethyloctanediols or hydroxyl-containing hyperbranched compounds or dendrimers, as described in the patent applications DE 198 09 643 A1, DE 198 40 605 A1, and DE 198 05 421 A1.

[00073] Further examples of suitable reactive diluents are polycarbonatediols, polyesterpolyols, poly(meth)-acrylatediols or hydroxyl-containing polyadducts.

[00074] Examples of suitable reactive solvents which may be used as reactive diluents are butyl glycol, 2-methoxypropaol, n-butanol, methoxybutanol, n-propanol, ethylene glycol monomethyl ether, ethylene glycol monobutyl ether, ethylene glycol monobutyl ether, diethylene glycol monomethyl ether, diethylene glycol monoethyl ether, diethylene glycol diethyl ether, diethylene glycol monobutyl ether, trimethylolpropane, ethyl 2-hydroxypropionate or 3-methyl-3-methoxybutanol and also derivatives based on propylene glycol, e.g., ethoxyethyl propionate, isopropoxypropanol or methoxypropyl acetate.

[00075] As most preferred reactive diluents (a4) which may be crosslinked with actinic radiation, use is made, for example, of (meth)acrylic acids and esters thereof, maleic acid and its esters, including monoesters, vinyl acetate, vinyl ethers, vinylureas, and the like. Examples that may be mentioned include alkylene glycol di(meth)acrylate, polyethylene glycol di(meth)acrylate, 1,3-butanediol di(meth)acrylate, vinyl (meth)acrylate, allyl (meth)acrylate, glycerol tri(meth)acrylate, trimethylolpropane tri(meth)acrylate, trimethylolpropane di(meth)-acrylate, styrene, vinyl toluene, divinylbenzene, pentaerythritol, tri(meth)acrylate, pentaerythritol tetra(meth)acrylate, dipentaerythritol penta(meth)acrylate, isopropylene glycol di(meth)acrylate, hexanediol di(meth)acrylate, ethoxyethoxyethyl acrylate, N-vinylpyrrolidone, phenoxyethyl acrylate, dimethylaminoethyl acrylate, hydroxyethyl (meth)acrylate, butoxyethyl acrylate, isobornyl

(meth)acrylate, dimethylacrylamide and dicyclopentyl acrylate, the long-chain linear diacrylates described in EP 0 25.0 .631 A1 with a molecular weight of from 400 to 4000, preferably from 600 to 2500. For example, the two acrylate groups may be separated by a polyoxybutylene structure. It is also possible to use 1,12-dodecyl diacrylate and the reaction product of 2 moles of acrylic acid with one mole of a dimer fatty alcohol having generally 36 carbon atoms. Mixtures of the aforementioned monomers are also suitable.

Further examples of suitable reactive diluents curable with actinic radiation are those described in Römpp Lexikon Lacke und Druckfarben, Georg Thieme Verlag, Stuttgart, New York, 1998, on page 491 under the entry on "Reactive diluents".

[00076] The coating compositions of the invention may further optionally comprise one or more pigments and/or fillers. The filler and/or pigment may comprise one or more color and/or effect pigments, fluorescent pigments, electrically conductive pigments and/or magnetically shielding pigments, metal powders, scratchproofing pigments, organic dyes, organic and inorganic, transparent or opaque fillers and/or nanoparticles.

[00077] Where the coating composition is used to produce electrically conductive coating compositions, it will preferably comprise at least one electrically conductive pigment and/or at least one electrically conductive filler.

[00078] Examples of suitable effect pigments are metal flake pigments such as commercially customary aluminum bronzes, aluminum bronzes chromated in accordance with DE 36 183 A1, and commercially customary stainless steel bronzes, and also nonmetallic effect pigments, such as pearlescent pigments and interference pigments, for example, platelet-shaped effect pigments based on iron oxide with a color from pink to brownish red, or liquid-crystalline effect pigments. For further details, attention is drawn to Römpp Lexikon Lacke und Druckfarben, Georg Thieme Verlag, 1998, page 176, "Effect pigments" and pages 380 and 381, "Metal oxide- mica pigments" to "Metal pigments", and to the patent applications and parents DE 36 36 156 A1, DE 37 18 446 A1, DE 37 19 804 A1, DE 39 30 601 A1, EP 0 068 311 A1, EP 0 264 843 A1, EP 0 265 820 A1, EP 0 283 832 A1, EP 0 293 746 A1, EP 0 417 567 A1, US 4,828,826 A, and US 5,244,649 A.

[00079] Examples of suitable inorganic color pigments are white pigments such as titanium dioxide, zinc white, zinc sulfide or lithopones; black pigments such as carbon black, iron manganese black or spinel black; chromatic pigments such as chromium oxide,

chromium oxide hydrate green, cobalt green or ultramarine green, cobalt blue, ultramarine blue or manganese blue, ultramarine violet or cobalt violet and manganese violet, red iron oxide, cadmium sulfoselenide, molybdate red or ultramarine red; brown iron oxide, mixed brown, spinel phases and corundum. phases or chrome orange; or yellow iron oxide, nickel titanium yellow, chrome titanium yellow, cadmium sulfide, cadmium zinc sulfide, chrome yellow or bismuth vanadate.

[00080] Examples of suitable organic color pigments are monoazo pigments, diazo pigments, anthraquinone pigments, benzimidazole pigments, quinacridone pigments, quinophthalone pigments, diketopyrrolopyrrole pigments, dioxazine pigments, indanthrone pigments, isoindoline pigments, isoindolinone pigments, azomethine pigments, thioindigo pigments, metal complex pigments, perinone pigments, perylene pigments, phthalocyanine pigments or aniline black.

[00081] For further details, attention is drawn to Römpp -Lexikon Lacke und Druckfarben, Georg Thieme Verlag, 1998, pages 180 and 181, "Iron blue pigments" to "Black iron oxide", pages 451 to 453, "Pigments" to "Pigment volume concentration", page 563, "Thioindigo pigments", page 567, "Titanium dioxide pigments", pages 400 and 467, "Naturally occurring pigments", page 459, "Polycyclic pigments", page 52, "Azomethine pigments", "Azo pigments", and page 379, "Metal complex pigments".

[00082] Examples of fluorescent pigments (daylight fluorescent pigments) are bis(azomethine) pigments.

[00083] Examples of suitable electrically conductive pigments are titanium dioxide/tin oxide pigments and mica pigments. A most preferred electrically conductive pigment is Minatec® 40CM from EM Industries. Examples of magnetically shielding pigments are pigments based on iron oxides or chromium dioxide. Examples of suitable metal powders are powders of metals and metal alloys such as aluminum, zinc, copper, bronze or brass.

[00084] Suitable soluble organic dyes are lightfast organic dyes with little or no tendency to migrate from the novel aqueous multicomponent coating material or from the coatings produced from it. The migration tendency can be estimated by the skilled worker on the basis of his or her general knowledge in the art and/or determined by means of simple preliminary range-finding tests, as part of tinting experiments, for example.

[00085] Examples of suitable organic and inorganic fillers are chalk, calcium sulfates, barium sulfate, silicates such as talc, mica or kaolin, silicas, oxides such as aluminum hydroxide or magnesium hydroxide, or organic fillers such as polymer powders, especially those of polyamide or polyacrylonitrile. For further details, attention is drawn to

5 R6mpp Lexikon Lacke und Druckfarben, Georg Thieme Verlag, 1998, pages 250 ff., "Fillers"

[00086] It is of particular advantage with regard to viscosity and rheology to use mixtures of platelet-shaped inorganic fillers such as talc or mica and non-platelet-shaped inorganic fillers such as talc, dolomite, calcium sulfates or barium sulfate.

10 [00087] Examples of suitable transparent fillers are those based on silica, alumina or zirconium oxide, especially nanoparticles.

[00088] The amount of the above-described pigments and/or fillers in the coating compositions of the invention is generally from 0 to 50% by weight, based on the total nonvolatile of the coating composition, preferably from 5 to 50% by weight, more preferably from 5 to 45% by weight, with particular preference from 5 to 40% by weight, with very particular preference from 5 to 35% by weight, and most preferably from 5 to 30% by weight, all based on the total nonvolatile of the coating composition.

15 [00089] The dual cure coating compositions of the invention may further comprise one or more tackifiers. The term tackifier refers to polymeric adhesives additives which increase the tack, i.e., the inherent stickiness or self-adhesion, of the adhesives so that after a short period of gentle pressure they adhere firmly to surfaces (cf. Ullmann's Encyclopedia of Industrial Chemistry, CD-ROM, Wiley VCH, Weinheim, 1997, "Tackifiers")

[00090] Examples of suitable tackifiers are high-flexibility resins selected from the group consisting of homopolymers of alkyl (meth) acrylates, especially alkyl acrylates, such as poly(isobutyl acrylate) or poly(2-ethylhexyl acrylate), which are sold under the brand name Acronal® by BASF Aktiengesellschaft, Elvacite® by Dupont, Neocryl® by Avecia, and Plexigum® by Röhm; linear polyesters, as commonly used for coil coating and sold, for example, under the brand name Dynapol® by Dynamit Nobel, Skybond® by SK Chemicals, Japan, or under the commercial designation LTW by Hüls; linear difunctional oligomers, curable with actinic radiation, with a number average molecular weight of more than 2000, in particular from 3000 to 4000, based on polycarbonatediol or polyester-diol,

which are sold under the designation CN 970 by Craynor or the brand name Ebecryl® by UCB; linear vinyl ether homopolymers and copolymers based on ethyl, propyl, isobutyl, butyl and/or 2-ethylhexyl vinyl ether, sold under the brand name Lutonal® by BASF Aktiengesellschaft; and nonreactive urethane urea oligomers, which are prepared from bis (4, 4-isocyanatophenyl) methane, N,N-dimethylethanolamine and diols such as propanediol, hexanediol or dimethylpentanediol and are sold, for example, by Swift Reichold under the brand name Swift Range® or by Mictchem Chemicals under the brand name Surkopak® or Surkofilm®.

[00091] The tackifiers may be used in an amount of from 0 to 10% by weight, more preferably from 0.1 to 9% by weight, with particular preference from 0.3 to 8% by weight, and most preferably from 0.4 to 5% by weight, based in each case on the solids of the dual cure coating composition of the invention.

[00092] The coating compositions of the invention may also have one or more photoinitiators and most preferably will have at least one photoinitiator. If the coating composition is to be crosslinked with UV radiation, it is generally necessary to use a photoinitiator. When used, the photoinitiator will be present in the coating material preferably in fractions of from 0.1 to 10% by weight, more preferably from 0.2 to 8% by weight, with particular preference from 0.3 to 7% by weight, and most preferably from 0.5 to 5% by weight, based in each case on the solids of the coating composition.

[00093] Examples of suitable photoinitiators are those of the Norrish II type, whose mechanism of action is based on an intramolecular variant of the hydrogen abstraction reactions as occur diversely in the case of photochemical reactions (by way of example, reference may be made here to R6mpp Chemie Lexikon, 9th, expanded and revised edition, Georg Thieme Verlag, Stuttgart, Vol. 4, 1991) or cationic photoinitiators (by way of example, reference may be made here to R6miop Lexikon Lacke und Druckfarben, Georg Thieme Verlag, Stuttgart, 1998, pages 444 to 446), especially benzophenones, benzoin ethers, or phosphine oxides. It is also possible to use, for example, the products available commercially under the names Irgacure® 184, Irgacure® 1800 and Irgacure® 500 from Ciba Geigy, Genocure® MBF from Rahn, and Lucirin® TPO and Lucirin® TPO-L from BASF AG. Besides the photoinitiators, customary sensitizers such as anthracene may be used in effective amounts.

[00094] The dual cure coating compositions of the invention may also optionally comprise at least one thermal crosslinking initiator. At from 80 to 120°C, these initiators form radicals which start the crosslinking reaction. Examples of thermolabile free-radical initiators are organic peroxides, organic azo compounds or C-C-cleaving initiators such as dialkyl peroxides, peroxydicarbonates, peroxide esters, hydroperoxides, ketone peroxides, azo dinitriles or benzpinacol silyl ethers. C-C-Cleaving initiators are particularly preferred since their thermal cleavage does not result in the formation of any gaseous decomposition products which might lead to defects in the seal. Such thermal initiators may be present in amounts of from 0 to 10% by weight, preferably from 0.1 to 8% by weight, and in particular from 1 to 5% by weight, based in each case on the solids of the coating material.

[00095] The coating material may further comprise water and/or at least one inert organic or inorganic solvent. Examples of inorganic solvents are liquid nitrogen and supercritical carbon dioxide. Examples of suitable organic solvents are the high-boiling ("long") solvents or low boiling solvents commonly used in coatings, such as ketones such as methyl ethyl ketone, methyl isoamyl ketone or methyl isobutyl ketone, esters such as ethyl acetate, butyl acetate, ethyl ethoxypropionate, methoxypropyl acetate or butyl glycol acetate, ethers such as dibutyl ether or ethylene glycol, diethylene glycol, propylene glycol, diisopropylene glycol, butylene glycol or dibutylene glycol dimethyl, diethyl or dibutyl ether, N-methylpyrrolidone or xylenes or mixtures of aromatic and/or aliphatic hydrocarbons such as Solventnaphtha®, petroleum spiril- 135/180, dipentenes or Solvesso® (cf. also "Paints, Coatings and Solvents", Dieter Stoye and Werner Freitag (editors), Wiley-VCH, 2nd edition, 1998, pages 327 to 349).

[00096] The coating composition of the invention may further optionally comprise one or more coating additives in effective amounts, i.e., in amounts of up to 40% by weight, with particular preference up to 30% by weight, and in particular up to 10% by weight, based in each case on the solids of the coating composition of the invention. Examples of suitable coatings additives are UV absorbers; light stabilizers such as HALS compounds, benzotriazoles or oxalanilides; free-radical scavengers; crosslinking catalysts such as dibutyltin dilaurate or lithium decanoate; slip additives; polymerization inhibitors; defoamers; emulsifiers, especially nonionic emulsifiers such as alkoxylated alkanols and

polyols, phenols and alkylphenols or anionic emulsifiers such as alkali metal salts or ammonium salts of alkane carboxylic acids, alkanesulfonic acids, and sulfo acids of alkoxyated alkanols and polyols, phenols and alkylphenols; wetting agents such as siloxanes, fluorine compounds, carboxylic monoesters, phosphoric esters, polyacrylic acids and their copolymers, polyurethanes or acrylate copolymers, which are available commercially under the tradename Modaflow® or Disperlon®; adhesion promoters such as tricyclodecane-dimethanol; leveling agents; film-forming auxiliaries such as cellulose derivatives; flame retardants; sag control agents such as ureas, modified ureas and/or silicas, as described for example in the references DE 199 24 172 A1, DE 199 24 171 A1, EP 0 192 304 A1, DE 23 59 923 A1, DE 18 05 693 A1, WO 94/22968, DE 27 51 761 C1, WO 97/12945, and "farbe + lack", 11/1992, pages 829 ff.; rheology control additives, such as those known from the patents WO 94/22968, EP 0 276 501 A1, EP 0 249 201 A1, and WO 97/12945; crosslinked polymeric microparticles, as disclosed for example in EP 0 008 127 A1; inorganic phyllosilicates such as aluminum magnesium silicates, sodium magnesium phyllosilicates and sodium magnesium fluorine lithium phyllosilicates of the montmorillonite type; silicas such as Aerosils™ silicas; or synthetic polymers containing ionic and/or associative groups such as polyvinyl alcohol, poly(meth)acryl- amide, poly(meth)acrylic acid, polyvinyl- pyrrolidone, styrene-maleic anhydride or ethylene-maleic anhydride -copolymers and their derivatives or hydrophobically modified ethoxylated urethanes or polyacrylates; flattening agents such as magnesium stearate; and/or precursors of organically modified ceramic materials such as hydrolyzable organometallic compounds, especially of silicon and aluminum. Further examples of suitable coatings additives are described in the textbook "Lackadditive" [Additives for coatings] by Johan Bieleman, Wiley-VCH, Weinheim, New York, 1998.

[00097] It will be appreciated that the coating composition of the invention may be used in the processes of the invention in different forms. For instance, given an appropriate choice of above described components (a1), (a2), and (a3), and of the further constituents that may be present, the coating composition of the invention may be a liquid coating composition which is substantially free from organic solvents and/or water. Alternatively, the coating composition of the invention may comprise a solution or dispersion of the above-described constituents in water and/or organic solvents. It is a further advantage of

the coating composition of the invention that solids contents of up to 80% by weight, based on the coating composition of the invention, may be formulated. Moreover, given an appropriate choice of its constituents as described above, the coating composition of the invention may be a powder coating composition, such as clearcoat. Additionally, such powder coating compositions may be dispersed in water to give powder slurry coating compositions.

[00098] The coating composition of the invention may be a one-component or two-component system as desired. If the coating composition of the invention is a one-component system, the thermally curable crosslinking component (a3) may in some cases need to be blocked to prevent premature crosslinking during storage. If the coating composition of the invention is a two-component system, the thermally curable crosslinking component will be stored separately from the other components and will not be added to them until shortly before use.

[00099] The method of preparing the coating composition of the invention may generally be carried out using conventional mixing of the above-described components in appropriate mixing equipment, such as stirred tanks, dissolvers, Ultraturrax, inline dissolvers, toothed-wheel dispersers, pressure release homogenizers, microfluidizers, stirred mills or extruders. It will be appreciated that appropriate measures to minimize radiation activated crosslinking should be employed, i.e., the elimination of radiation sources.

[000100] The process of the invention is used for the coating of microporous surfaces having pores with a size of from 10 to 1500, preferably from 20 to 1200, and in particular from 50 to 1000 nm. More preferably, the coating compositions of the invention may be used to seal microporous surfaces. Most preferably, the coating compositions of the invention may be used to substantially eliminate defects in one or more cured coating films caused by vaporous outgassing.

[000101] The surfaces to be coated may or may not be electrically conductive or electrically insulating. Illustrative electrically conductive surfaces may be metallic or nonmetallic. Suitable nonmetallic conductive surfaces are, for example, electrically conductive ceramic materials, especially oxides and chalcogenides, or electrically conductive polymers.

[000102] In a particularly preferred embodiment of the processes of the invention, the substrate to be coated will be a microporous surface of a shaped article or component. Such articles or components may be made of materials such as wood, glass, leather, plastics, minerals, foams, fiber materials and fiber reinforced materials, metals, metalized materials, and mixtures thereof.

[000103] Illustrative foams are those foams per DIN '7726: 1982-05 which have open and/or closed cells distributed over their entire mass and which have a density lower than that of the framework substance. Preference is given to elastic and flexible foams per DIN 53580 (cf. also Rbmpp Lexikon Chemie, CD-ROM: Version 2.0, Georg Thieme Verlag, Stuttgart, New York, 1999,1 "Foams").

[000104] Metalized materials may be made of wood, glass, leather, plastics, minerals, foams, fiber materials, fiber reinforced materials, and mixtures thereof.

[000105] Suitable minerals include fired and unfired clay, ceramic, natural stone or artificial stone or cement. Illustrative fiber materials preferably comprise glass fibers, ceramic fibers, carbon fibers, textile fibers, polymer fibers or metal fibers, composites of these fibers, and mixtures thereof. Suitable fiber reinforced materials include plastics reinforced with the aforementioned fibers.

[000106] Suitable metals include reactive utility metals, especially iron, steel, zinc, aluminum, magnesium, titanium, and alloys of at least two of these metals.

[000107] Illustrative shaped components and articles are automotive components such as body panels, truck beds, protective plates, fenders, spoilers, hoods, doors or lamp reflectors; sanitary articles and household implements; components for buildings, both inside and outside such as doors, windows, and furniture; industrial components, including coils, containers, and radiators; and electrical components, including wound articles, such as coils of electric motors.

[000108] Preferred shaped components and articles will be made of SMC (sheet molded compound) or BMC (bulk molded compound). Thus, in one aspect of the process of the invention, the coating composition of the invention will be applied to one or more surfaces of shaped articles or components made of SMC or BMC.

[000109] The coating compositions of the invention may be applied one or more times to a particular substrate. In the such cases, the applied coatings of the invention may be the

same or different. Most preferably, the coating compositions of the invention will be applied only once to a particular surface. That is, desirable sealing performance and the substantial elimination of surface defects caused by substrate outgassing may, and preferably will be, obtained with a single application of the coating composition of the invention.

[000110] The coating compositions of the invention will generally be applied so as to have a wet film thickness that after curing results in a dry film thickness of from 10 to 100, preferably 10 to 75, more preferably from 10 to 55, and most preferably from 10 to 35 μm .

[000111] Illustrative application methods suitable for applying the coating compositions of the invention include spraying, brushing, knife coating, flow coating, dipping, rolling, and the like. Spray application methods, such as compressed air spraying, airless spraying, high-speed rotation, electrostatic spray application (ESTA), alone or in conjunction with hot-spray application such as hot air spraying, for example, are preferred.

[000112] The coating compositions may be applied at temperatures of no more than 200°F, so that appropriate application viscosities are attained without any change or damage to the coating composition of the invention or its overspray (which may be intended for reprocessing) during the short period of thermal stress. Hot spraying, for instance, may be configured in such a way that the coating composition of the invention is heated only very briefly in the spray nozzle or shortly before the spray nozzle. More preferably the coating compositions of the invention will be applied at a temperature of from 70 to 135°F, and most preferably at 80 to 110°F.

[000113] The spray booth used for application may be operated, for example, with a circulation system, which may be temperature-controllable, and which is operated with an appropriate absorption medium for the overspray, an example of such medium being the coating composition of the invention of the invention itself.

[000114] Processing and application of the coating composition of the invention may be done under visible light with or without wavelengths in the electromagnetic spectrum capable of activating radiation curable component (a1). However, it will be appreciated that if application and/or processing occurs with illumination having wavelengths which could activate radiation curable component (a1) or optional reactive diluent (a4), all vessels or lines containing the coating composition of the invention will be covered so as to protect the

coating from said illumination. In this way, pre-gelation of the coating composition of the invention can be avoided.

[000115] In accordance with the invention, applied coating compositions of the invention are then cured with actinic radiation, most preferably UV radiation, and thermally.

5 [000116] Curing may take place after a certain rest period. This period may have a duration of from 0 s to 2 h, preferably from 1 min to 1 h, and most preferably from greater than 5 min to less than 30 min. The rest period is used, for example, for leveling and devolatilization of the coat of the coating composition of the invention or for the evaporation of volatile constituents such as solvents, water or carbon dioxide, if the coating composition of the invention was applied using supercritical carbon dioxide as solvent. The drying which takes place in the rest period may be shortened and/or assisted by the application of elevated temperatures below 140° F, more preferably below 120°, provided this does not entail any damage or alteration to the coat of the coating composition of the invention, such as premature thermal crosslinking, for instance.

10 [000117] Curing takes place preferably with electromagnetic radiation such as UV radiation or electron beams. If desired, it may be supplemented by or conducted with actinic radiation from other radiation sources. Most preferably such first stage curing will be done under an inert gas atmosphere, i.e., via the supply of carbon dioxide and/or nitrogen directly to the surface of the applied coating composition of the invention. In the case of UV cure, the inert gas prevents the formation of ozone.

15 [000118] Curing with electromagnetic radiation may be done via customary and known radiation sources and optical auxiliary measures. Illustrative examples of suitable radiation sources are high or low pressure mercury vapor lamps, with or without lead, iron, or gallium doping in order to open up a radiation window of up to 450 nm, or electron beam sources. Metal halide emitters may also be used. Most preferred are sources of UV radiation. The arrangement of these sources is known in principle and may be adapted to the circumstances of the workpiece and the process parameters. In the case of workpieces of complex shape, as are envisaged for automobile bodies, the regions not accessible to direct radiation (shadow regions) such as cavities, folds and other structure undercuts may be 25 (partially) cured using pointwise, small-area or all-round emitters, in conjunction with an automatic movement means for the irradiation of cavities or edges. Radiation cure of the 30

applied coating compositions of the invention may be effected by subjecting the applied coatings to electromagnetic radiation in amounts of from 1.5 to 15.0 J/cm², preferably from 1.0 to 10.0 J/cm², and most preferably from 2.0 to 7.0 J/cm².

[000119] The coating compositions of the invention may be said to be radiation cured when at least 75% of the radiation curable groups from component (a1) and optional component (a4) are crosslinked, preferably at least 80%, more preferably at least 90% and most preferably at least 95%, based on the total number of radiation curable groups from radiation curable component (a1) and optional reactive diluent (a4). The % of crosslinking of radiation curable groups may be determined by RAMAN microscope since the peak corresponding to radiation curable groups such as C=C groups decreases with increasing crosslinking. A reference peak is chosen that does not change during the curing of the coating composition. It will be appreciated that the location of the reference peak is dependent upon the chemistry of the particular coating composition and may be selected by one of skill in the art.

[000120] The equipment and conditions for these curing methods are described, for example, in R. Holmes, UV and E.B. Curing Formulations for Printing Inks, Coatings and Paints, SITA Technology, Academic Press, London, United Kingdom 1984.

[000121] Curing may take place in stages, i.e., by multiple exposure to electromagnetic radiation. This may also be done alternately, i.e., by curing in alternation with UV radiation and with electron beams.

[000122] The thermal curing takes place in accordance with the customary and known methods such as heating in a forced air oven or exposure to IR or NIR lamps. As with the curing with actinic radiation, thermal curing may also take place in stages. Advantageously, the thermal curing takes place at temperatures of from 120°F to 350°F, preferably between 150 to 300°F, and more preferably between 200 to 300°F, and most preferably from 225 to 275°F. The coatings of the invention may be thermally cured for a period of from 1 min up to 2 h, preferably 2 min up to 1 h, and in particular from 5 to 30 min.

[000123] The radiation curing and thermal curing may be employed simultaneously or alternately. Where the two curing methods are used in alternation it is possible, for example, to commence with thermal curing and to end with electromagnetic radiation. In

other cases it may prove advantageous to commence with electromagnetic radiation curing and to end with it as well.

[000124] In another aspect of the invention, a process of the invention may comprise the application of the coating composition of the invention, radiation cure of the applied coating composition, application of one or more other coating compositions to the radiation cured coating composition, and subsequent joint thermal curing of both the radiation cured coating composition of the invention and the applied one or more other coating compositions.

[000125] It is a very particular advantage of the process of the invention that the shaped components and SMCs and BMCs coated with the coating composition of the invention, following drying and exposure to electromagnetic radiation, preferably in an incompletely cured state, may be immediately overcoated, which for the production of the shaped components of the invention and for the SMCs and BMCs of the invention signifies a significant time, energy and cost saving.

[000126] Furthermore, articles coated with the coating composition of the invention, after drying and exposure to electromagnetic radiation, may be subjected to thermal aftercuring, at 90°C for 20 minutes, for example, after which the coated articles of the invention may be stored in stacks to await further processing without fear of sticking or deformation.

[000127] It is an aspect of the invention that the coating compositions of the invention provide crosslinked films of exceptional integrity at relatively low temperatures, i.e., less than 160°F. In particular, UV cured films of the coating composition of the invention have crosslinked networks of an integrity sufficient to block porosity, i.e., the volatile substrate outgassing which occurs during the curing of subsequently applied coating compositions.

As a result, topcoated articles and substrates obtained by the processes of the invention are substantially free of surface defects resulting from volatile outgassing from the porous substrate or article. Such defects are often referred to as porosity, microbubbles, blisters, popping, or pops. It has been found that porosity defects can, in some instances, be completely eliminated with the use of the coating compositions of the invention.

[000128] In addition, coated articles and substrates of the invention have outstanding thermal stability. It has been observed that even under thermal loads at high temperatures

for several hours, the surface of the radiation and thermally cured coating is not damaged. As a result, articles and substrates previously coated with the coating composition of the invention may therefore be adhered directly to uncoated automobile body fixtures prior to the submersion of the automobile fixture into the electrodeposition bath. That is, submersion into an electrodeposition bath and curing oven have not been found to adversely affect the previously applied coating compositions of the invention.

[000129] The coatings and seals obtained by the procedure of the invention also possess outstanding sandability and polishability, thus facilitating the repair of defects.

[000130] Coating compositions of the invention may be overcoated with all customary and known, aqueous or conventional, liquid or solid, water-free and solvent-free, physically or thermally and/or actinic-curable primers, electrocoats, primer-surfacers or antistonechip primers, solid-color and/or effect topcoats or basecoats, and also clearcoats. The resultant multicoat systems exhibit outstanding intercoat adhesion.

EXAMPLES

Example 1

[000131] Coating composition samples 1-5 were prepared as follows. Per Table 1 below, a polyester resin, radiation curable component (a1), tackifier resin, and leveling agent were mixed in a 1-quart can under mild cowles blade agitation for approximately 5 minutes until homogenous. The rheology additive was added and dispersed under medium cowles agitation for approximately 5 minutes. EEP was then added and allowed to mix. The conductive mica was slowly added under mild agitation over a period of about 5 minutes followed by a similar addition of talc. The catalyst was then added. The sample was sealed and held overnight. The sample was processed through cowles-like "High Speed Dispersion" and agitated at 7500 rpm for 20 minutes. The particle size was checked by draw down method and was found to be approximately 27 μ m on the grind gage. A photoinitiator solution was then added. The photoinitiator solution was previously made and consisted of both photoinitiators and the butyl acetate. The finished, unreduced A component was filtered through two mesh cones to eliminate dirt and/or other particles and stored in a 1-quart steel can until spray application. Component B and A were then mixed together prior to spray application.

Table 1

Preparation of Component A						
Raw Material	SAMPLE #					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Polyester I ¹	30.87	37.32	33.69	0.00	0.00	0.00
Polyester II ²	0.00	0.00	0.00	32.09	24.53	28.21
Radiation curable component (a1) ³	15.14	13.73	16.53	14.90	16.55	13.10
Polyester Tackifier ⁴	2.00	1.81	2.19	2.00	2.23	1.76
Leveling agent	0.47	0.43	0.43	0.47	0.53	0.53
Rheology Additive ⁵	4.74	4.30	4.33	4.74	5.28	5.30
EEP ⁶	10.44	9.47	9.57	10.20	11.32	11.38
Conductive Mica	16.06	14.56	14.70	15.80	17.55	17.63
Talc	6.94	6.29	6.36	6.80	7.55	7.58
Catalyst ⁷	0.19	0.17	0.17	0.20	0.23	0.23
Photoinitiator ⁸	0.10	0.09	0.10	0.10	0.11	0.11
Photoinitiator ⁹	0.98	0.89	0.90	0.96	1.07	1.07
Butyl Acetate	12.06	10.94	11.04	11.74	13.04	13.10
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Preparation of total coating composition						
Component A	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Component B ¹⁰	20.02	10.90	10.92	16.50	27.56	28.99

Example 2

- 5 [000132] The porosity sealing abilities of samples 1-5 were evaluated as follows.
- [000133] Five 4.6" wide and 14" tall panels of 213-4 "John Deere White" SMC were selected for each sample. Each panel was stressed to magnify porosity by slowly bending the middle of the panel over an 8" diameter stainless steel can for approximately 5 seconds with the panel's top facing upward. The bending action was repeated for each panel with

¹ Crodopol 025 from Croda.

² Setal 26-1615 from Akzo Nobel.

³ Acrylated aliphatic urethane oligomer commercially available from UCB Chemicals as IRR 351.

⁴ Polyester adhesive resin based on vinyl chloride, commercially available from Creanova as LTS.

⁵ Bentone gel

⁶ Ethyl ethoxy propionate

⁷ Nuodex® LI from OMG

⁸ Irgacure® 819 from Ciba Specialities

⁹ Lucirin® TPO from BASF AG

¹⁰ Isocyanurate of HDI

the fulcrum 1/3 from top of panel as well as 1/3 from the bottom of the panel. Finally, the bending of the middle of the panel was repeated. Panels with breaks or raised cracks were rejected and not used.

[000134] One day prior to the application of samples 1-5, the stressed panels were

- 5 wiped clean with isopropanol and allowed to completely dry at room temperature. One side of each panel was masked with 2" tape. Samples 1-5 were applied by air-atomized hand spray to five panels at a time. Target dry film thickness for each sample was 1.1 mil +/- 0.2 mil. Panels were flashed in the spray booth for 10 minutes prior to UV cure. The panels were then UV cured to a total dose of 3.0 J/cm² (UVA + UVB) in two passes using Fusion
10 HP-6 and medium pressure Hg bulb. A conveyor speed of 21 fpm was used to provide the required dosage. Panels were allowed to cool to room temperature and the masking tape removed.

[000135] The UV cured panels for each sample were then thermally cured in a gas oven at a temperature of 250°F for 20 minutes (part temperature) and allowed to cool.

- 15 [000136] The UV and thermally cured samples were then sprayed with a black basecoat¹¹ to a target dry film thickness of 0.8 mil +/-0.1 mil. Panels were flashed 10-15 minutes in the spray booth. A solvent borne clearcoat¹² was then applied to the flashed basecoated panels to a target dry film thickness of 1.8 mil +/-0.2 mils. The clearcoated panels were flashed 10 minutes in the spray booth. The panels were then placed in a pre-
20 heated gas oven at 288 °F along with a blank SMC having a thermocouple attached thereto. The coated panels were baked for 20 minutes at a part temperature of 285 °F.

[000137] Porosity sealing ability was evaluated by recording the number of pops visible on the sealed and unsealed sides. Each sample's effectiveness at sealing was evaluated per the ratio of the number of pops on the sealed side of each panel to the number
25 of pops of the unsealed side.

[000138] The results are set forth below in Table 2. It can be seen that the use of coating compositions according to the invention allow the use of decreased amounts of thermally curable crosslinking agent while still obtaining optimum porosity sealing.

Table 2

¹¹ commercially available from BASF Corp of Southfield MI as E86.

¹² commercially available from BASF Corp of Southfield MI as E126 Stainguard® IV Clearcoat.

Sample											Total		% Sealed
	1		2		3		4		5				
1	0	54	0	28	0	52	0	59	0	48	0	241	100.0%
2	1	61	0	81	0	24	0	64	0	51	1	281	99.6%
3	0	75	0	94	0	47	0	32	2	88	2	336	99.4%
4	0	110	0	47	0	40	0	109	0	43	0	349	100.0%
5	0	52	0	119	0	89	0	30	1	86	1	376	99.7%
6	2	50	0	51	0	49	2	61	2	48	6	259	97.7%

Examples 3-6 Preparation of Panels

5 [000139] Three 4" wide and 6" tall panels of SLI-252 Automotive Grade SMC were selected for each sample for each test. A total of twelve panels was selected for each sample.

10 [000140] One day prior to the application of samples 1-5, the SMC panels were wiped clean with isopropanol and allowed to completely dry at room temperature. Samples 1-5 were applied by air-atomized hand spray to twelve panels at a time. Target dry film thickness for each sample was 1.1 mil +/- 0.2 mil. Panels were flashed in the spray booth for 10 minutes prior to UV cure. The panels were then UV cured to a total dose of 3.0 J/cm² (UVA + UVB) in two passes using Fusion HP-6 and medium pressure Hg bulb. A conveyor speed of 21 fpm was used to provide the required dosage.

15 [000141] The UV cured panels of each sample were then thermally cured in a gas oven at a temperature of 250°F for 20 minutes (part temperature) and allowed to cool.

[000142] The dual cured samples were then sprayed twelve panels at a time with a U28WW033A Oxford White One Step™ primer¹³ to a target dry film thickness of 1.0 mil +/-0.1 mil. Panels were flashed 10-15 minutes in the spray booth. The flashed and primed panels were baked for 10 minutes at 300 °F (part temperature) in a gas oven.

20 [000143] The primed panels of samples were then sprayed twelve panels at time with a high solids solvent borne white basecoat¹⁴ to a target dry film thickness of 0.8 mil +/-0.1

¹³ commercially available from BASF Corp of Southfield MI.

¹⁴ commercially available from BASF Corp of Southfield MI as E86WJ466L Oxford White.

mil. Panels were flashed 10-15 minutes in the spray booth. A solvent borne clearcoat¹⁵ was then applied to the flashed basecoated panels to a target dry film thickness of 1.8 mil +/- 0.2 mils. The clearcoated panels were flashed 10 minutes in the spray booth. The panels were baked for 20 minutes at a part temperature of 285 °F. Each sample panels was ambient conditioned for 72 hours before any tests or conditioning was performed.

Example 3

[000144] The initial adhesion of samples 1-5 was evaluated per Ford Motor Company Specification BI106-01, Method B, hereby incorporated by reference. A grade of 2 or more indicates a failure. Mode indicates the type of failure, with UV/P indicating a loss of adhesion between the sample coating composition and the primer. The results are set forth below in Table 3.

Table 3

Sample	Grade			Mode
1	1	1	1	UV/P
2	0	0	1	UV/P
3	0	0	0	UV/P
4	0	0	0	UV/P
5	0	0	0	UV/P
6	0	0	0	UV/P

Example 4

[000145] The humidity resistance of samples 1-5 was evaluated per Ford Motor Company Specification BI104-02, Method A, hereby incorporated by reference. Samples were placed in testing for 10 days at 110°F. Final adhesion was evaluated per Ford Motor Company Specification BI106-01, Method B, hereby incorporated by reference. A grade of 2 or more indicates a failure. Mode indicates the type of failure, with UV/P indicating a loss of adhesion between the sample coating composition and the primer. The results are set forth below in Table 4.

Table 4

Sample	Grade	Mode

¹⁵ commercially available from BASF Corp of Southfield MI as E126CG012M Stainguard® IV Clearcoat.

1	2	2	2	UV/P
2	1	1	2	UV/P
3	1	1	1	UV/P
4	1	1	1	UV/P
5	1	1	1	UV/P
6	1	1	1	UV/P

Example 5

[000146] Samples 1-5 were subjected to thermal shock testing per Ford Motor Company Specification BI107-05, (replacement test for BO160-04 "High Pressure Cleaner") hereby incorporated by reference. A rating of 20 means an adhesion or blistering loss of 0 cm²; 19 is a loss of 0.5 cm²; 18 is a loss of 1.0 cm²; etc. Adhesion loss or blistering in an area greater than 0.5 cm² indicates a failure, i.e., a rating of 19 or less. The results are set forth below in Table 5. Mode indicates the type of failure with UV/P indicating a loss of adhesion between the sample coating composition and the primer.

Table 5

Sample	Rating	Mode	Rating	Mode	Rating	Mode	Rating	Mode	Rating	Mode	Rating	Mode
1	20	none	20	none	20	none	19	UV/P	20	none	20	none
2	19	SMC	20	none	20	none	20	none	19	UV/P	20	none
3	20	none	19	UV/P	20	none	19	UV/P	20	none	20	none
4	20	none	20	none	20	none	20	none	20	none	20	none
5	19	SMC	20	none	20	none	20	none	20	none	20	none
6	19	SMC	20	none	20	none	20	none	20	none	20	none

Example 6

[000147] Samples 1-5 were subjected to cold gravel testing per SAE J400, Method I, hereby incorporated by reference. Three pints of gravel per the test method at 70 psi and at a temperature of -25 °C. Samples were conditioned to temperature at least 24 hours prior to testing. A rating of less than 5 is a failure. A size rating of C or D (i.e., chips greater than 3 mm) is a failure. The results are set forth below in Table 6.

Table 6

Samples	Rating	Mode	Rating	Mode	Rating	Mode

1	5D	UV/P	5D	UV/P	5D	UV/P
2	5C	UV/P	5D	UV/P	5B	UV/P
3	5B	UV/P	5B	UV/P	5C	UV/P
4	5B	UV/P	5B	S/UV	5B	S/UV
5	5B	S/UV	5B	S/UV	5B	S/UV
6	5B	S/UV	5B	S/UV	5C	UV/P

[000148] It can be seen that coating compositions according to the invention provide an improvement in the obtainment of a desirable balance of optimum performance properties.